

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SPOKANE EXPO-VISIT BY COMMISSIONER HENDERSON

SUMMARY. COMMISSIONER HENDERSON, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SPECIAL ASST WARNES, MET WITH KEY AUSTRIAN OFFICIALS DEC 4. PRINCIPAL RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS WERE (A) CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT SALLINGER'S DECISION TO RECONSIDER CHAMBER'S EARLIER NEGATIVE RECOMMENDATION ON PARTICIPATION, AND (B) SALLINGER'S INSTRUCTION FOR CHAMBER STAFF TO CONSULT WITH PERTINENT INDUSTRIES ON WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION. ISSUE WILL BE REVIEWED BY BOARD OF CHAMBER IN MEETING BEFORE CHRISTMAS. FONOFF AND MIN HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION, BUT KEY DECISION-MAKER WILL BE FEDERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, END SUMMARY.

1. IN SERIES OF MEETINGS DEC 4 WITH KEY AUSTRIAN OFFICIALS, COMMISSIONER HENDERSON, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. WARNES AND ECON/COMM COUNSELOR, REVIEWED CURRENT STATE OF FOREIGN COUNTRY PARTICIPATION IN EXPO AND MADE PERSUASIVE CASE WHY AUSTRIA SHOULD RECONSIDER
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ITS EARLIER NEGATIVE DECISION. MR. HENDERSON EMPHASIZED

THAT, WHILE EXPO'S PRINCIPAL THEME WAS ENVIRONMENT, SUB-THEME WAS MAN AND RECREATION AND THAT AUSTRIA WITH ITS STRONG INTEREST IN TOURISM COULD BENEFIT SUBSTANTIALLY THROUGH PARTICIPATION. HE NOTED THAT COMMERCIAL PROMOTION COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY GETTING SUPPORT OF KEY AUSTRIAN INDUSTRIES SUCH AS PAPER, METALLURGY AND SKI EQUIPMENT. HE STRESSED FACT THAT EXPO WOULD BE ONLY INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION IN U.S. IN 1970'S AND THAT PARTICIPATION COULD BE EFFECTED WITH MINIMUM COST AND LITTLE MANPOWER. HE EMPHASIZED ALSO THAT MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WILL VISIT SPOKANE EXPO AND MILLIONS MORE WILL VIEW IT ON TV.

2. SEQUENCE OF MEETINGS WAS AS FOLLOWS:

A. MORNING-PRESIDENT OF FEDERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, RUDOLF SALLINGER, RECEIVED COMMISSIONER IN PARLIAMENT BUILDING. PRESENT WERE SECGEN OF CHAMBER, ARTHUR MUSSIL, AND SENIOR CHAMBER OFFICIALS. SALLINGER'S MAIN CONCERN WAS 6-MONTH LENGTH OF EXPOSITION AND FACT THAT INDUSTRY DID NOT FEEL PARTICIPATION WOULD GIVE AUSTRIA ADEQUATE RETURN. HE SAID THAT ATMOSPHERE IN BIE HAD BEEN RATHER CHILLY TOWARDS SPOKANE, BUT COMMISSIONER COUNTERED BY NOTING SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS IN RECENT WEEKS, PARTICULARLY FRANCE AND GERMANY, ALTHOUGH THESE TWO COUNTRIES HAD NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED PARTICIPATION. AS FOR MANPOWER PROBLEM, HENDERSON SUGGESTED THAT INDUSTRY MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP IN FIELDING STAFF ON ROTATING BASIS AND THAT CHAMBER SHOULD CONSIDER POSSIBILITY OF USING STUDENTS TO MAN AUSTRIAN EXHIBIT. ALTHOUGH SALLINGER DID NOT APPEAR PERSUADED, HE DID DECIDE TO RE-OPEN SUBJECT. MOREOVER, SECGEN MUSSIL WAS IN FAVOR OF FURTHER EXPLORATION BY CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY INTEREST.

B. SUBSEQUENT MEETING WAS WITH SECGEN WALTER WODAK, NO. 2 OFFICIAL IN FONOFF, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DR. ERICH PICHLER, DEPUTY CHIEF OF FONOFF'S ECON DIVISION. WODAK SAID THAT PURSUANT TO AMBASSADOR HUMES' RECENT DISCUSSION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KIRCHSCHLAEGER, LATTER HAD INDICATED FONOFF WOULD AGAIN GIVE ITS SUPPORT. KIRCHSCHLAEGER PLANNED TO DISCUSS ISSUE AT NEXT CABINET

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MEETING. WODAK CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT OVERRIDING VOICE ON INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITIONS WAS CHAMBER. HE SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS PARTICIPATION BUT NOTED THAT MOMENTUM OF INTEREST MUST COME FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY.

C. FOLLOWING THESE MEETINGS AMBASSADOR HOSTED LUNCH WHICH INCLUDED DR. MANFRED MAUTNER-MARKHOF, ONE OF AUSTRIA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL INDUSTRIALISTS WHO IN

PAST WAS INVOLVED IN AUSTRIAN PARTICIPATION IN NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR AND MONTREAL EXPO, AS WELL AS OFFICIALS FROM CHAMBER AND MIN HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT. BRIEF SLIDE PRESENTATION FOLLOWED LUNCHEON. DR. MAUTNER-MARKHOF INDICATED HE WOULD DO HIS UTMOST TO PERSUADE CHAMBER TO REVERSE EARLIER DECISION.

3. COMMENT: GIVEN FACT THAT AUSTRIANS HAD EARLIER MADE UP THEIR MINDS NOT TO GO TO EXPO, IT WILL BE UPHILL BATTLE TO EFFECT REVERSAL. NEVERTHELESS, FOREGOING SEQUENCE OF MEETINGS RE-OPENED MATTER, AND IF ENOUGH KEY BUSINESSMEN CAN BE PERSUADED TO TAKE POSITIVE STANCE IN CHAMBER'S DELIBERATIONS, FAVORABLE OUTCOME MIGHT RESULT. AMBASSADOR AND EMB STAFF WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH KEY OFFICIALS IN GOA AND INDUSTRY.HUMES

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